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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 OSLO 000085

NOFORN
SIPDIS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PASS TO AMCONSUL YEKATERINBURG
AMEMBASSY ATHENS PASS TO AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PASS TO AMEMBASSY PODGORICA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2020/02/26
TAGS: [NATO](#) [KNNP](#) [PREL](#) [NO](#)
SUBJECT: DepMin of Defense: NATO'S Deterrence Capabilities Still Key

CLASSIFIED BY: James T. Heg, Deputy Chief of Mission; REASON: 1.4(B),
(D)

¶1. (C) Meeting with DCM, PolOff and A/DAO before the February 26 release of the joint letter from five Foreign Ministers to NATO SYG Rasmussen calling for a discussion on NATO's nuclear policy at the upcoming Tallinn meeting, Deputy Minister of Defense Espen Barth Eide strongly criticized news reports which portrayed the initiative as an effort to remove all nuclear weapons from Europe. Barth Eide said news reports were "completely flawed," adding that deterrence remained an absolute core NATO competence. He said he was pleased that Secretary Clinton had emphasized the importance of deterrence several times in her January 22 speech during the NATO new Strategic Concept seminar, adding that while there was "nothing wrong" with out of area operations, but we also need to remember key NATO's deterrence capabilities.

¶2. (C) Comment: Barth Eide seemed very concerned that the press portrayal of the five country initiative would be misinterpreted, and clearly wanted to show his continued support for nuclear deterrence in Europe at this time. End Comment.

¶3. (U) Begin Text of Letter:

His Excellency
Mr Anders Fogh Rasmussen
Secretary General to the
North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NATO Headquarters
Brussels

26 February 2010

Excellency,

In the Strasbourg Declaration on Alliance Security, Heads of State and Government have stated that while deterrence remains a core element of our overall strategy, NATO will continue to play its part in reinforcing arms control and promoting nuclear and conventional disarmament in accordance with the Nuclear

Non-proliferation Treaty, as well as non-proliferation efforts.

The international agenda in the field of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation will converge in the spring of 2010. START follow on negotiations are ongoing and the US Nuclear Posture Review is expected to be published soon. We welcome the US initiative for a nuclear security summit in April 2010. The NPT review conference in May is a crucial milestone for strengthening the international regime for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

We hope we will see further achievements in the area of disarmament and arms control, i.a. the ratification of the CTBT, a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) and the inclusion of sub-strategic nuclear weapons in subsequent steps towards nuclear disarmament.

Credible deterrence on the one hand and arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation on the other, must be seen as integral elements of a comprehensive policy. NATO will have to continue to pursue that policy in a balance and mutually reinforcing way, as has been proven successful in the past.

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Arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation are higher on the international agenda than they have been in many years. We welcome the initiatives taken by President Obama to strive towards substantial reductions in strategic armaments, and to move towards reducing the role of nuclear weapons and seek peace and security in a world without nuclear weapons. We believe that also in NATO we should discuss what we can do to move closer to this overall political objective.

Our meeting in Tallinn, which takes place on the eve of the NPT Review Conference, provides us with an opportunity to open a comprehensive discussion on these issues and to produce guidance for the process on the new Strategic Concept. Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Norway therefore propose that you include the topic of NATO's nuclear policy in our evolving security environment in the agenda for that meeting.

We approach this discussion from a realistic point of view. Our future policy requires the full support of all Allies. NATO is in the process of defining its direction in an evolving security environment. We consider our initiative as a contribution to this discussion. This is an opportunity we should not miss.

Signed: Steven Vanackere, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Belgium, Guido Westerwelle, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, Jean Asselborn, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, Maxime Verhagen, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the kingdom of the Netherlands, Jonas Gahr Stoere, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway
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